

Supply—Veterans Affairs

something be inserted so that the veteran's wife or his best girl could sew them on evenly. A bar was put in depending on the number of medals a man had. These, with a message of appreciation from the Minister of National Defence, were put in the parcel and sent to the veteran. But on the point made, I can assure the hon. member that, whether we have any success or not, we will look into the matter with regard to the medals that have gone to the next of kin.

Mr. Lennard: Will the minister refer at this time to the matter I brought up as to why the personnel of Dieppe were not awarded the Northwest Europe Star or decoration. I do not want to know, but I think it should be said at this time.

Mr. Gregg: I would prefer to have the document I have here on that, but I think I can give it quite clearly. My hon. friend means the medal for western Europe.

Mr. Lennard: Yes.

Mr. Gregg: That was the medal authorized by the war office to come into effect for those who landed and fought on the continent of Europe after V-E day, which was, as my hon. friend knows—

Mr. Fulton: After D-day?

Mr. Gregg: Yes, assault on Europe day. That was quite a long time after the Dieppe battle. I know that after a great deal of correspondence steps were taken by Canada and by my colleague the Minister of National Defence to that end. The request was made that these medals be made available for Dieppe; but after long conferences it was decided that if exceptions were made for one group which landed, exceptions would have to be made for the various members of smaller commando raids and other attacks on Europe prior to the main landing.

The Chairman: Shall the item carry?

Mr. Harkness: Is the minister now in a position to answer the question I asked last night? How many of those people who are listed as temporary employees are likely to become permanent employees before the year is out? Is there any estimate of that? The minister said he would take that as notice and answer later.

Mr. Gregg: There are a number of factors involved, not the least of which is the civil service commission. My officials state that they would not like to estimate that there would be more than 3,800 in the whole organization during the coming year.

Mr. Harkness: You do not mean 3,800 more, but 3,800 altogether?

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Mr. Gregg: We have 2,331 now and we hope to bring that up to 3,800.

Mr. Lennard: Can the minister state how many are only temporary that have not passed examinations, who are now in certain grades who apparently are not qualified?

Mr. Gregg: I am afraid I have not any information in that form.

Mr. Hellyer: Will the minister give further consideration to the request of the Canadian corps of firefighters? I understand that they have two modest demands, first, eligibility to receive the Canadian Volunteer Service medal and then to be given preference in employment in the civil service. As the minister is aware, these men enlisted for service anywhere without reservation and were subject to great danger. In the British zone, at least, they were required to stay out at times when the armed forces were ordered underground, and they were not too highly compensated for their services. I admit that they have been given most of the benefits that have accrued to the armed forces, but as they did such great service in that area, as they helped with the loading of barges for the attack on Europe, as a commitment was made, at least by inference, by Major General LaFleche that they would be granted equal rights with the armed forces, I wonder if it would not be possible for the minister to give further consideration to their requests?

Mr. Gregg: The two requests, civil service benefits and the C.V.S. medal, are both outside my department. Fundamentally the men referred to were not attested and consequently are not technically veterans and therefore do not come under the Department of Veterans Affairs. By virtue of the fact that similar benefits have accrued to them we have been interested in them.

Perhaps my hon. friend and the committee would be interested in knowing that the firefighter received a gratuity of \$15 for every thirty days of service overseas; he was made eligible for vocational training; if in receipt of pension, which I shall come to, he was eligible for benefits under the Veterans Land Act; if he was hurt by enemy action he was eligible for pension; he was eligible for veterans insurance; he came under the provisions of the Reinstatement in Civil Employment Act, which I will admit at once was not used very much, and he received benefits under the Unemployment Insurance Act.

Mr. Hellyer: The auxiliary supervisors were eligible for the Canadian Volunteer Service medal and I was wondering if the same privilege could not be given to the firefighters?